



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Elliot Krieger, Communications – (401) 222-8471  
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### **Education Department Distributes \$75 million in Federal Stimulus Funds**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) has distributed to school districts a total of \$74.6 million in federal stimulus funds for the current fiscal year, Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist announced today (October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009).

The funds, made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), are meant to save and create jobs and improve student achievement by advancing reform in four essential areas: improving teacher effectiveness, supporting and intervening in the lowest-performing schools, establishing world-class standards and assessments that are internationally benchmarked, and developing data systems to track progress and foster improvement.

“One of the greatest investments we can make is an investment in education for our children,” said Governor Donald L. Carcieri. “Used strategically, the Recovery Funds can improve student achievement, particularly in our urban districts, support effective early education and intervention opportunities, support educator quality, and ensure Rhode Island has the technology and information systems to advance further our goal of success for all students. Every penny we spend on education will reap rewards for years to come.”

“These federal funds give us an unprecedented opportunity to transform Rhode Island education and ensure that all students are ready for success in college, careers, and life,” said Commissioner Gist. “As we distribute these funds, RIDE will be vigilant to ensure that schools and districts use these federal dollars effectively to advance learning for all students and to close achievement gaps.”

The federal government has made a total of \$120.9 million in ARRA funds available to Rhode Island school districts for the current (FY 2010) fiscal year. To receive the funds, each district submits to RIDE a plan that specifies how it will use the funds. Once RIDE approves the plan, RIDE releases the funds to the districts.

The funds come to the state through seven separate federal programs:

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- Title I Part A (to support high-poverty schools and districts): \$35.8 million allocated; \$24.7 million distributed;
- IDEA Part B (to support the education of students with disabilities): \$43.7 million allocated; \$14.8 million distributed;
- IDEA Part B-619 (preschools for students with disabilities): \$1.8 million allocated; \$518,000 distributed;
- Federal Stabilization Funds (to save and create jobs and to advance school reform): \$37.2 million allocated; \$33.8 million distributed;
- Enhancing Education through Technology: \$382,942 allocated and distributed;
- McKinney-Vento (homeless education): \$174,966 allocated and distributed; and
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Equipment Assistance Grants (kitchen equipment): \$268,131 allocated and distributed.

During the previous fiscal year (FY 2009), an additional \$36.1 million in federal stabilization funds was allocated and distributed. The total amount of federal ARRA education funds distributed to date (over two fiscal years) is \$110,657,311.

Because the ARRA funds are a one-time infusion of federal aid, districts cannot use the funds to create long-term obligations that might be unsustainable in the future.

Activities that have been funded to date include:

- salaries and fringe benefits for educators and support staff;
- out-of-district tuition for students with disabilities;
- student transportation costs;
- instructional technology equipment and software;
- improvement of data systems;
- textbooks and classroom supplies; and
- small renovation projects to instructional buildings.